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ABSTRACT

Little coordination exists among the various federal, state, and local initiatives for educational intervention programs for specially targeted populations. This paper discusses issues involved in the development of coordinated educational programs for disadvantaged pupils, with particular reference to Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. It begins by briefly covering the notion of coordination as it has appeared in the literature. It then reviews the available evidence on the coordination of core curricular instruction with the curriculum and instruction offered in a variety of educational intervention programs. The second section of the paper presents an analysis of assumptions that have guided policymaking. It also points out some of the consequences of these assumptions, which are, in part, grounded in suspect beliefs about how children learn or fail to learn. The final section of the paper proposes some alternatives to current assumptions which influence policy. It argues for curricular congruence as a key to the design of effective programs for alleviating school failure. The paper focuses primarily on reading education. A list of references is appended. (PS)

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THE COORDINATION AMONG REGULAR CLASSROOM READING PROGRAMS AND TARGETED SUPPORT PROGRAMS

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COORDINATION AMONG REGULAR CLASSROOM READING PROGRAMS AND TARGETED SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Among those who discuss educational intervention programs for specially targeted student populations (e.g. Chapter 1 for economically and educationally disadvantaged, P.L. 94-142 for the handicapped, bilingual education for those whose native language is not English) there seems to be general agreement that little coordination exists among the various Federal, state, and local initiatives. While coordination has been variously defined in these discussions, regardless of definition, virtually no one reports locating coordinated efforts. In this paper, we will review and frame previous discussions of coordination and clarify the issues involved in the development of coordinated educational programs to provide optimal instruction for those children who are regarded as having special needs.

At the outset we briefly discuss the notion of coordination as it has appeared in the literature. We then review the available evidence on the coordination of core curricular instruction with the curricula and instruction offered in a variety of educational intervention programs designed to alleviate the school failure of targeted student populations. In most cases these intervention programs are in place because of policy making at higher governance levels and the programs are subject to regulations issued by Federal or state agencies or both. We assess the influence of the policies emanating from higher levels on the policies and practices at the lowest levels, the school and classroom settings.

In the second section of the paper, we present an analysis of a set of assumptions that have seemed to guide the policy making at the highest levels and point out some of the consequences of these assumptions. Here we are particularly concerned with how understandings of the higher-level policies have affected those developing lower-level policy, especially at the local district, school, and classroom levels. We argue that most higher-level policies are grounded in assumptions about how children learn, or fail to learn, in schools and that many of the guiding assumptions are clearly suspect.

In the final section we propose some alternatives to the current assumptions that guide most policy at the highest levels, and which influence policy and practice at lower levels. We argue for curricular congruence as a key to the design of effective programs for alleviating school failure. In one sense we propose to redefine coordination with a focus on the quality of services received as a result of participating in instructional intervention programs that derive from policies emanating from the Federal level especially. Through-

out, we focus primarily on efforts to alleviate reading failure since most of the programs have been designed, explicitly or implicitly, to address this problem. The coordination of core curriculum instruction with the support program instruction and the coordination of instruction between support programs are our principal concerns.

What is Meant by Coordination

Coordination of instructional programs has been approached in several ways. One view of coordination concerns the relationships between programs and policies at different levels of governance. These vertical analyses of coordination emphasize the consistency of regulatory policies concerning educational intervention programs for targeted student populations. An example might be the relationships among the federally funded Chapter 1 program, a state funded remedial program (e.g. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (PSEN), and a locally funded remedial program. Some of those examining this vertical coordination have focused more on the issue of overlap among the target populations and the difficulty of maintaining clear audit trails when programs and policies emanating from different levels of governance have similar goals and target populations (cf., Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review, 1982). These vertical analyses seem to primarily concern examinations of laws, policies, and regulations, both formal and informal. For instance, Moore et al. (1983) conducted a textual analysis of Federal and state policies and laws governing several educational intervention programs in eight states. Here, then, coordination was defined as an element of the regulatory features of different intervention programs. Coordination was noted, in this case, when the regulations and policies were found to contain language that required that complementary uses of separate programs and funding sources be identified and effected. However, little evidence of coordination of programs was found.

However, Moore and her colleagues (1983) also attempted to assess horizontal coordination among programs. In this case, different programs offered at the same level of governance were examined for coordination in regulatory features. For instance, complementary use requirements in Chapter 1, P.L. 94-142 and the Vocational Education Act were examined. Since it is obvious that some students would be eligible for programs under each of these Federal initiatives the analysis sought evidence of coordination in the Federal regulations governing these programs. Again, little evidence was found.

We have previously argued (Johnston, McGill-Franzen, & Allington, 1985) that, in the case of reading failure, there is

little reason to expect extensive legislative coordination. Indeed, often legislative initiatives presume that student subpopulations (e.g., economically disadvantaged, learning disabled, bilingual, migrant) are identifiable and therefore, by definition, require different educational interventions. We argued that little theoretical or empirical evidence existed to support either assumption. In any case, the various analyses of regulatory coordination, whether examining vertical or horizontal coordination seem to conclude that Federal policy has been generated in a sort of patchwork design with too little regard for coordination of programs, policies, and regulations.

We began with this brief sketch of efforts to identify regulatory and programmatic coordination at the Federal level because we believe that the lack of attention to coordination at this level has had some influence on the design of programs at lower levels of governance. That is, we agree with Elmore and McLaughlin (1981) that the implementation of policies at higher levels forces policy making at lower levels. In addition, some of that lower-level policy making (e.g., state policies, local district policies, school and individual's policies) is shaped by higher-level policies as those policies are translated and understood by those at lower levels. However, our primary interest is in coordination as it relates to the delivery of instructional services to children in school settings. This view of coordination is by no means unique. Allington and Shake (1986), Hannifin and Barrett (1983), Johnston, Allington, and Afflerbach (1985), and Moore, Hyde, Blair, and Weitzman (1981) among others, all discuss coordination in terms of the coherent and parsimonious delivery of curriculum to students. In each case the issue is the coordination of the content of instruction. These are calls, in whole or part, for a curricular alignment between core curriculum instruction and the instruction offered in compensatory or special education intervention programs.

Finally, others have discussed coordination in both the regulatory and curriculum senses. Birman (1981), Ginsburg and Turnbull (1981), Kimbrough and Hill (1981), and Leinhardt, Bickel and Pallay (1982) each address the issue of students who are eligible for services from multiple programs. A primary emphasis here is the overlap between populations and the problems of meeting these students' instructional needs with any one program or with services from multiple programs. Less clear in these papers is any call for coordination of the core curriculum with the curricula of the support programs. Instead, the emphasis is on coordination of eligibility criteria and service delivery between programs. This is not to argue that curricular coordination is wholly neglected in these papers, just that other features of the delivery of instruction are emphasized.

Current Status of Curricular Coordination

Curriculum coordination has never appeared as part of the Federal regulatory language for any of the various intervention programs that emerged as a result of Federal laws or policies. As noted previously, this may stem from the assumptions of differential instructional needs underlying some of the legislation. Alternatively, it may have resulted from the General Education Provisions Act which prohibits legislation that can be construed to authorize Federal agencies or employees from exercising any direct supervision or control of curriculum or instruction. Nonetheless, in a similar vein, few if any state regulations present guidelines concerning the coordination of core curriculum instruction and support program instruction. In fact, as noted earlier, little evidence of any sort of coordination has been identified, vertical or horizontal, amongst the various levels of governance or amongst the various support programs in the analyses of Federal and state program regulations and policies.

Unfortunately, the same seems too often to be true concerning coordination at the local district level. In our review we sought reports that analyzed school district policies and practices in implementing compensatory and special education programs. We sought in the literature evidence that districts established policies or engaged in practices that resulted in coordination between core curriculum reading instruction and Chapter 1 reading instruction. In addition, we sought evidence that a district coordinated Chapter 1 reading instruction with reading instruction offered in a resource room program for learning disabled students and, perhaps, reading instruction offered in a bilingual program.

District Level Program Coordination

In one of the largest studies of the coordination of Federal education programs with core local program, Kimbrough and Hill (1981) noted that "few districts appear to make serious attempts at coordination" (p. 42). However, the districts examined were all selected as instances in which potential problems existed in administering Federal education programs. Thus the results, while illustrative, may portray an overly pessimistic view of the situation. Nonetheless, the results do suggest that too often school district administrators have continued to treat Federal educational programs "as foreign entities, to be administered separately from the local core program and from one another" (p. 41). The report notes

two points that must be considered: 1) district-level efforts at coordination can work and, 2) district-level administrators have far greater resources and influence for producing coordination of Federal programs than do school principals and teachers.

Kimbrough and Hill also report that they found greater coordination in a district where district-level administrators had attempted to reduce scheduling and content conflicts between the core instructional program and the Federal education categorical programs. In this case, a district-wide set of goals for each content area was established for all programs and the core and categorical programs complemented each other in terms of both teaching methods and curriculum materials.

In case studies of two large school districts Moore and his colleagues (1981) examined the "service quality" of educational environments offered children at risk, including a variety of Federal and state categorical programs. They report finding little coordination at the school district level and suggest several potential reasons for this situation. First, they argue that, generally, district-level administrators are not selected on the basis of potential contribution to coherent and coordinated instructional programs. Since the focus of these analyses was "the right to read" they sought to determine whether district-level administrators had been selected because of a demonstrated expertise in developing a district plan for implementing coherent reading instructional services. The review of documents and interviews suggested that generally this criterion was not present in job descriptions of district-level administrators. Thus, they argue that coordination at the district level was unlikely since it seemed neither a priority nor an area of special expertise of district-level administrators.

A second feature they noted was that districts tended to fragment responsibilities for instructional planning amongst several district-level program coordinators. However, these program coordinators operated independently and typically had no direct line of administrative influence. That is, a district with a reading program coordinator placed that position out of any central administrative line of responsibility so that, while the reading programs in the district were organizationally under the control of the position, the reading coordinator had no authority to implement programs at the school level. Only through good humor and persuasive argument could the ideas of the reading coordinator be carried out.

In addition, the reading coordinator was not seen as having authority over reading instruction in special education or bilingual programs since each had a different district-level

coordinator who was responsible for students eligible for services under those categorical programs. The special education and bilingual coordinators, in turn, had no authority over either regular core programs or personnel. Finally, no district-level key administrator encouraged or enforced efforts or policies to provide coordinated programs. Moore and his colleagues (1981) argue from their data that if there exists no effective district-level procedures for cooperative planning among the various district content area and program coordinators, then one can expect programmatic fragmentation to occur and to increase over time.

Birman (1981) notes that, in some cases, state regulations or policies may work to increase fragmentation. Her analysis of the overlap between P.L. 94-142 and Title I programs indicates that some states have adopted policies, which are often based on a misinterpretation of Federal regulations, that have excluded handicapped children from receiving Title I services, even when they were eligible for such services. In other cases, school districts had adopted similar policies in the absence of such state policy. In either case, however, such policies seem to negate efforts to coordinate programs and services, since the exclusionary policy decrees no joint service. On the other hand, some states, and some districts, had adopted different interpretions and policies. She notes some settings in which dually eligible children routinely received services under both Title 1 and P.L. 94-142 and these services were deemed essential for successful mainstream placement of handicapped children. Though not directly noted by Birman, it seems likely that district policies that encourage providing dual services to eligible children would work to foster cooperative planning more so than district-level exclusionary policies. That is, district-level policies that systematically deny dual, or multiple program participation among eligible students would seem to make cooperative planning among different programs almost irrelevant. However, as Kimbrough and Hill (1981) and Moore et al. (1981) clearly document, policies allowing dual and multiple program participation are surely not sufficient to assure such coordination.

The influence of district-level administrators' beliefs about the relationship between support instruction and core curriculum was noted in a report by Johnston, Allington, and Afflerbach (1985). They found that district administrators of remedial reading programs split into three categories of beliefs about such program relationships. One group thought the remedial reading and core reading programs should be rather tightly coordinated with remedial instruction being congruent with the core curriculum. Another group indicated the two programs should offer instruction that was distinct from each other, usually arguing that core curriculum instruction was obviously not working since student achievement was unsatis-

factory. A third group indicated that the two programs should have some similarity but also provide some distinctly different curricular options. Interestingly, coordinated instructional efforts were far more likely to occur when program administrators believed coordination was appropriate. In these cases, nearly two-thirds of the time the instruction offered in each setting was congruent and the communication among core and support teachers was more frequent with the result being that both teachers knew about the instruction the other offered. Conversely, when district administrators indicated that they believed the instructional programs should be distinct, little evidence of coordination, communication, or congruence was identified. These data suggest that district-level administrative beliefs not only vary about the appropriateness and need for coordinated efforts but that these beliefs are influential in determining whether such efforts are implemented.

Bogdan (1983) offers what may be useful insights here. He notes that special educational programs seldom exist as an integated part of an educational system but, rather, "they are add-ons" (p. 432). This lack of integration was evidenced by a lack of clarity in administrative supervisory responsibilities in many districts. In addition, he notes that most classroom teachers and even specialist teachers were skeptical and irreverent about official categorical identifications but this was not the case with district administrators who, more generally, took such identification at face value. In short, it seems that district-level administrators were more likely to adhere to a belief system that supported categorical separateness than those involved in the daily delivery of instruction to participants.

Leinhardt, Bickel, and Pallay (1982) note a variety of historical facts that seem to work against program coordination, including the several professional and philosophical positions concerning the nature of school failure. Perhaps, as educators become increasingly identified with a single professional or programmatic category, as would likely be the case with separate program coordinators, their belief systems and professional identification become far more firmly entrenched than those who work daily with multiple category students. These beliefs are then translated into instructional practices through both formal and informal policies.

In summary, district-level policies do seem to affect the level of coordination between core curriculum instruction and support program instruction and also the coordination between the various support programs. In most districts, however, coordination of either type seems a neglected aspect of district-wide plans. The available evidence suggests that many districts have not structured administrative responsibilities in a manner that facilitates such coordination and that even in

the event such coordination is attainable, the efforts of district-wide administrators in monitoring coordination has been minimal.

The lack of district-wide initiatives seems to enhance fragmentation among core and support programs. This lack of initiative may stem from several sources but three areas seem most likely candidates. First, the low priority seemingly given to achieving a coordinated effort in the employment of district-level administrators. Without a clear goal and leadership at the district level, coordination of support programs is unlikely. Second, the misinterpretation of Federal and state regulations, or the very conservative interpretation of the same may limit coordination. Some have argued, for instance, that district administrators may select certain program designs because they seem safer hedges against compliance objectives and auditors (McLaughlin, Shields & Resabek, 1985). Third, the traditions and professional beliefs of district administrators may actively oppose coordinated efforts. Unlike those who have direct daily contact with students in different categorical programs, district-level administrators seem to invest more heavily in belief systems that perpetuate separateness of categorical programs and instructional efforts.

School Level Program Coordination

In the absence of district-level efforts to attain coordination of core and support program curricula or among various support services, attempts at coordination fall to school-level administrators or the instructional staff of the core and support programs. Perhaps because of the degree of autonomy afforded many school-level administrators, coordination efforts at the school level, in various forms, seem more common than district-level plans and policies, yet still occurr infrequently (Hannifin & Barrett, 1983). Whether we look for coordination of any separate support program with the core curriculum, coordination among support programs, or more complete coordination between and among core and support programs, the current literature suggests fragmentation and separateness seem more the norm than does coordinated effort.

When coordination efforts are defined as scheduling plans and policies, several reports note difficulties in the delivery of support instruction to students. Lignon and Doss (1982), Archambault and St. Pierre (1980), and Kimbrough and Hill (1981) all report that participation in support programs often serves to replace core curriculum instruction. Students served by various support programs actually ended up with less instructional time than students not served. In comparing

schools with Title I programs to schools without such programs, others also report that students in Title I schools received less academic instructional time than students in non-Title I schools (Stanley and Greenwood, 1983). Similar results are reported for handicapped students attending resource room programs from mainstream classroom placements (Haynes & Jenkins, in press; Ysseldyke, Thurlow, Mecklenburg, & Graden, 1984). Thus, at the outset the evidence suggests that coordinating core curriculum instruction with support program instruction in order to provide targeted students with additional amounts of academic instructional time is not particularly common. Indeed, it seems that the lack of coordination results in reduced services to the students.

When coordination is seen as communication between the core and support instructional staff the evidence is also less than encouraging. Cohen, Intilli, and Robbins (1978) report a survey of teachers in 46 elementary schools in which they found that more than half of the classroom teachers reported that reading resource teachers rarely or never offered instructional information, suggestions, or materials. Bogdan (1983) reports that core program teacher and special education teachers indicated substantial confusion about who was responsible for instructional planning and delivery. His report parallels some of the situations discussed by Moore et al. (1981) in which both the support program teacher and the core program teacher thought the other was responsible for reading instruction.

In an interview study conducted in ten school districts in two states, we previously reported that nearly a third of core program and support program teachers could not remember when they had last had either an informal or formal discussion of remedial students needs, progress or concerns (Johnston, Allington, & Afflerbach, 1985). In addition, there was wide variability between the pairs of respondents in terms of these meetings with support teachers reporting more frequent and longer contacts about students than did the classroom teachers with whose students they worked. When queried on instructional needs and goals for specific remedial students there was little agreement between the responses of the classroom and remedial teachers. In a further assessment of communication we asked classroom and remedial teachers about the curricular materials used in each instructional setting (core classroom and support program). Two of every three support program teachers were unable to identify the reading instructional material the remedial student used in the core classroom reading context. Fewer than 1 in 10 core classroom teachers could name the material that remedial students from their classrooms used during support program instruction. Similar results were obtained in interviews conducted with participating teachers in an observational study reported by Allington, McGill-Franzen, and Boxer (in preparation).

Several studies have sought to assess coordination between the core and support instruction offered students. These studies reported observational analyses of the congruence between the content of instruction in classroom and remedial reading contexts. Allington, Shake, Stuetzel, and LaMarche (in press) observed students enrolled in remedial programs, though the observations included both core curriculum and support program instruction. The qualititive field notes were examined for several types of potential instructional coordination, or congruence. However, virtually no coordination was identified. The types of tasks, the specific skills emphasized and the nature of the instructional materials more often differed than matched. In short, the instruction remedial students received in the two settings seemed generally independent of each other. This occurred even in an in-class remediation design in which support program personnel offered remediation in the core curriculum classroom.

On the other hand, Pike (1985) reports an observational study conducted in four elementary schools with Chapter 1 programs in a district where coordination is emphasized. This study of second-grade students indicated a fairly high degree of congruence between the decoding skills taught in the core curriculum classroom and in the support program. The district provided a management checklist indicating the scope and sequence for decoding skills in the adopted basal reader series, and remedial teachers were to use this as a guide for instructional intervention. Most did, and although the remediation tended to focus only on this narrow band of reading behaviors, it was coordinated and the teacher interviews supported the suggestion that communication between core and support staff was ongoing. However, within some schools such coordination was less evident than in others, seemingly a result of support staff personality characteristics and professional beliefs.

The Haynes and Jenkins (in press) study, noted earlier, indicated little evidence of coordination among core and support program instruction for elementary special education students. They also noted wide variability in the amount and nature of both core and support program reading instruction offered students with seemingly similar instructional needs. Licopoli (1984) offers one of the rare observational studies of high school support programs. He noted few instances of coordination and suggests that participation in special education resource rooms offered little in the way of preparing handicapped students for participation in mainstream classes. Here, however, there seemed to be little agreement in the school about the fundamental purpose of the resource room support program with quite divergent views offered by

school-level administrators, resource room support staff, and core curriculum instructional staff.

While school-level coordination seems generally lacking there are a few reports that indicate such efforts do occur. Rickert, Ripple, and Coleman (1985), for instance, report on the first year of a project where "Chapter 1 instruction is offered in the regular classroom in direct support of the classroom reading program." They offer multiple reasons for the shift away from the previously used pullouts, a lack of appropriate instructional space in some schools for the pullout instruction, and the need for support for the classroom program in terms of Chapter 1 teachers serving as instructional models for classroom teachers. Their report provides little information about the effects of the shift in program design but they do note that problems were encountered with some classroom teachers reporting difficulties adjusting to having another teacher in the room, others reporting differences in philosophies about how to best meet the needs of poor readers and a few problems with personality conflicts.

The incidence of school-level coordination seems low and the level of coordination is quite variable in the available reports. Where they do occur, the most common attempts at coordination seem to be attempts to derive some plan for selecting students and programs when students are eligible for multiple program services. These efforts may include school-level policies that exclude students from multiple services or the development of school-level criteria for participation in one support program or another. This sometimes results in selection criteria for program participation that vary from school to school within a district. These efforts are generally not focused on coordination of the content of instruction. Moore et al. (1983) seem to best characterize the current situation in this area by noting that "program coordination both in the sense of deliberate steps to dovetail instructional effort and in the sense of less deliberate actions to make programs somehow fit into the school setting almost invariably falls to those actually delivering services to students. . . " (p.100). Thus, while some have pointed to the principal as a key factor in achieving school-level coordination (Moore et al., 1981) more often than not such leadership seems to be lacking. In most instances, neither district-level nor building-level administrators seem to provide adequate leadership for achieving either coordination between core curriculum programs and support programs or amongst the various support programs delivering services to low-achieving students.

One final comment is needed in concluding this section. There is evidence that curricular coordination does occur, though not frequently and rarely as a result of general program design or administrative planning. In these areas the

coordination is a result of "teacher deals" (Biklen, 1985). That is, a support teacher (e.g. remedial reading, learning disability, or speech/language specialist), through her own efforts and on the strength of her professional expertise and personal style manages to collaborate with some or many of the core curriculum classroom teachers whose children she serves. As Biklen notes, this coordination is often unnoticed, or if noticed not recognized, by key administrators. In addition, we agree with Biklen when he notes that while intervention programs for at-risk children ultimately depend on the expertise of the teachers providing the services, programs should not be hinged on teacher effort alone. That is, Allington et al. (in press) note that much well-intentioned instructional effort was unleashed in the compensatory education classes they observed. But, at the same time, the lack of leadership at higher levels left the support teachers primarily to their own resources and, at times, denied them even that. Biklen (1985) noted that support of the school principal was important to successful mainstreaming of handicapped children. Mainstreaming might ensue without active support but only on a limited and uneven basis. However, any resistance by the principal spelled doom for the effort. We think there is a parallel for the development of coordinated compensatory education programs. Ideally, principals would provide the leadership for such redesign but at the least they would not stand in the way.

The Effects of School-Level Program Coordination

While program coordination at the school-level is reported as uncommon there does exist some evidence to indicate not only that such coordination can be achieved but that these efforts can enhance student achievement. For instance, a report by the New York State Office of Performance Review (1984) noted that schools that were considered successful had greater amounts of interaction between classroom teachers and support program teachers combined with an emphasis on instructional continuity. Likewise, Venezky and Winfield (1979) found that more effective schools were more likely to have integrated support services. In their review of effective compensatory education practices Griswold, Cotton, and Hansen (in press) note coordination of the regular program with other support programs was one of the seven organizational attributes of successful Chapter 1 projects. Gezi (1986) also notes that coordination of compensatory instruction with core curriculum was one feature of leadership provided in successful compensatory education schools.

Nonetheless, we have argued elsewhere (Allington & Shake, 1986; Johnston, Allington, & Afflerbach, 1985) that as

attractive as coordination among programs appears we still have little understanding of the effects of coordination of any of the several types discussed and similarly impoverished notions of how such coordination can be routinely achieved. There is some reason to believe that coordination in terms of more appropriate scheduling of services could result in greater amounts of basic skills instruction being delivered to target students. While expanding the quantity of instruction seems likely to favorably affect achievement (Cooley & Leinhardt, 1980; Greenwood et al., 1981; Kiesling, 1978) and would rectify the current situation reported in schools in which support program participation seems to decrease quantity of instruction, such efforts seem minimal, and still insufficient. In a similar vein, we suppose that coordination that attempts to link the content of instruction will result in enhanced achievement. Here, however, we have rather few reports to buttress the argument. The work of Clay (1985) is the most powerful evidence but her work involves more than just aligning the support curricula with the core curriculum. Winfield (1986) assessed the achievement of Chapter 1 participants on reading skills that were emphasized by both the Chapter 1 teachers and the classroom teachers against those skills emphasized by one set of teachers or the other. She reports that the dual emphasis skills were more likely to be mastered than the single emphasis skills suggesting that the coordinated effort produced better learning and retention. However, in her data it was only lower-level reading skills (simple decoding tasks) that received the dual emphasis and the evidence suggests that these skills are relatively easier to master than some of the more complex skills that were not emphasized (drawing inferences from text). Thus, while supportive, these data cannot provide an adequate base for recommending curricular coordination. This is not to argue that achieving curricular coordination has little to recommend it, but simply that we lack empirical evidence. Indeed, later we will argue on theoretical grounds that curricular coordination is critical.

Effects of Federal, State, District, and Local Policies

We need to begin by noting that there is much opinion but little hard evidence to support any conclusion about the effects of policies developed at any level, except that policy making begets policy making. Our analysis of the various reports indicates that two views exist about the effects of Federal policies concerning the development and delivery of support program instruction. In one view Federal policies are the root of all of our problems. Moore et al. (1983) argued that the Federal goal of isolating Federal monies from state and local funds contributed to the administrative separation of the various support programs and that the full Federal funding

of Chapter 1 produced only minimal state bases for support of compensatory education. Cohen (1982) suggests that "specialization at the lower-level parallels developments higher up; it also impedes coordination of activities within schools and districts..." (p. 481). Ginsburg and Turnbull (1981) echo this view with their statement that "Federal fiscal controls have also unintentionally encouraged schools to isolate Federal programs from each other and from the regular school program" (p. 36). This view is also offered by Kaestle and Smith (1982).

The common theme in these analyses is that much, if not most, of the current fragmentation can be attributed to the rather patchwork development of Federal policies concerning the various laws, regulations, and programs intended to guarantee or enhance the education of target populations. This fragmented development has been coupled with continuously shifting regulations within programs and shifting interpretations of the same regulations (National Institute of Education, 1977a). On the other hand, the analysis by Moore et al. (1981) of implementation at the local level led them to conclude that state and Federal regulations had slight impact in the decisions made by district or building level personnel. In addition, they note that they found little evidence that any comparable level of effort to meet the needs of at-risk students would have existed in the absence of Federal policies. Similarly, McLaughlin (1982) notes that "federal policies cannot, by themselves, cause particular outcomes; they must be implemented within and through existing institutional arrangements..."(p. 567).

As a result of our analysis of the various reports we have adopted what might be considered an "interactionist" perspective. Like Leinhardt, Bickel, and Pallay (1982) and Stainback and Stainback (1984) we see much of the existing Federal policy structure as unnecessarily duplicative, unwieldy and influential in producing the fragmentation so often noted. However, the development of Federal policy has often followed shifting social beliefs about the nature of school failure and responded to political pressure brought to bear by different interest groups. Federal policy has as often reflected professional wisdom and social beliefs as it has nurtured or refined them. For example, the development of the pullout model, which has been so unanimously adopted in compensatory and special education seemed to follow the professional wisdom of a previous era as much as a desire of the Federal agencies to develop clear audit trails. The small-group clinical model adopted by Chapter 1 teachers and special education teachers mirrored the clinical model so prevalent in university-based clinics where these support teachers received specialized training. The use of separate and different curricular materials to meet the special instructional needs of special

populations is likewise part of the professional wisdom (Cook & Earlly, 1979; Dechant, 1981; Gilliland, 1974). An example, for instance, is the "differential teaching" model that has dominated compensatory and special education training for so long, and also fits very nicely into some misinterpretations of the "supplement-not-supplant" provision of Chapter 1.

While it is true that the pullout model of instructional delivery has undoubtedly contributed to the fragmentation of the instruction received by target students it seems unlikely that Federal policies can be wholly blamed for the institutionalization of the model. On the other hand, local administrators who prefer a safe bet in anticipation of a compliance audit might be edged away from other designs by the widespread understanding that Federal policies cast the pullout design in a favorable light. Likewise, state and district administrative organizational structures may have been refined by Federal policies but rarely does it seem that they were created by such policies. We feel we can argue this simply because of the wide variability in existing administrative structures one can currently find. The various Federal initiatives were primarily the result of shifting social beliefs and professional wisdom (Johnston, McGill-Franzen, & Allington, 1985). These shifts and influences largely produced Federal action and policy and thus the patchwork quality of much of the Federal effort. Without Federal policies much of the current special effort would be nonexistent. Thus the "Catch 22."

Analyzing the Assumptions and Their Consequences

Several assumptions seem to have guided Federal policy making in the past twenty years; the era when the Federal role expanded significantly. These assumptions were generally not the result of the Federal policies but, rather preceded them. The first, and probably most critical assumption, is that there exist several identifiable categories of at-risk children. Implicit in this assumption are the notions that 1) children in these several categories have different instructional needs, 2) that these categories are reliably different from one another and, 3) that we can identify children that fit in each category. Unfortunately, as has been argued elsewhere (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1983; Johnston, McGillFranzen, & Allington, 1985; Leinhardt, Bickel, & Pallay, 1982; Stainback & Stainback, 1984) there is little theoretical or empirical evidence to support any of these assumptions. These assumptions were not created by the Federal policy making but they have surely been maintained and strengthened by them.

The influences that have led to the fragmentation of support instruction services have fed and nurtured each other.

As educators, sociologists, psychologists, economists, and others, have created their various rationales for explaining school failure, a variety of beliefs about the etiology of school failure have arisen and shortly thereafter appears Federal policy. In our analysis of explanations for school failure we traced the evolution of economic disadvantagedness as a primary rationale and the resultant development of the Federal Title programs designed to compensate for such disadvantagedness (Johnston, McGill-Franzen, & Allington, 1985). The number of publications in professional journals with both reading and disadvantagedness as key descriptors rose steadily for better than a decade but then gave way to another developing belief system.

This shift was evidenced in the rise in the number of professional journal publications using the key descriptors reading and learning disability. In the past decade the number of such articles has risen tenfold and 10 years ago replaced the previous standard of reading and disadvantagedness. In fact, articles on reading failure are now more frequent in journals published for special education and learning disabilities professionals than in journals published for reading professionals. These trends in publishing seem to mirror the categorical identification of students and the expenditure of funds for providing support instruction. That is, the recent rise in the numbers of children identified as learning disabled, and the related rise in expenditures for the services provided, parallels the increase in publication with a brief time lag. However, there is little evidence that the passage of P.L. 94-142 created this trend since the number of articles on reading and learning disability had reached significant proportions before the enactment of the legislation. On the other hand, the legitimization of the category through the development of Federal policy seems to have had an enormous effect. Prior to the inclusion of learning disability as a reimbursable category, relatively few school districts had any significant number of students so classified. Now the situation has changed dramatically (Johnston, McGill-Franzen, & Allington, 1985; Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 1982).

Even though the number of children living at the "poverty level" has risen above earlier levels the number of disadvantaged children served by Chapter 1 programs continues to decline as do the funds to support such programs. We see the trends as reflections of shifting social beliefs about reading failure; beliefs not born in Federal policy making but nurtured by it. To reiterate our earlier point, however, there is little evidence to support the notion that children identified as learning disabled exhibit any substantial psychometric or educational differences from economically disadvantaged children who experience school failure (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1983). Rather than new populations with newly discovered

etiological bases for reading failure, what we have is shifting or developing social belief systems, that attribute reading failure to an ever increasing array of etiologies; etiologies invariably located in the learner. A common feature of these developing social beliefs and resultant intervention programs is the lack of concern for the possible deficiencies in the original educational environment in which the deficits were nurtured (Bogdan, 1983; Gelzheiser, 1985; Stainback & Stainback, 1984). When children fail to learn to read competently after some schooling we rush to categorically identify them with one program or another, but regardless of categorical identification, there seems little evidence of concern for adopting or improving the original educational program from whence they came. This "fix-it" mentality works against collaborative efforts to remedy reading failure because it presumes the etiology is centered in a deficit in the learner, not in the educational program. While it may be less distressing to the educational system to blame the victim, it is unlikely that wholehearted efforts for coordinated instructional planning will ensue until this belief system is modified.

While not as popular in the current debates the same could be said to be true of differences between migrant populations and either learning disabled or other economically disadvantaged non-migrant children, though there is a separate Federal program for that population also. The key qualities of effective support programs seem generally similar regardless of student classification (Leinhart & Pallay, 1982). Federal policy, then, by providing the various categorical programs has influenced the design of state and local programs but the policies seem to have mirrored emerging social belief systems. The development of the policies strengthened these social beliefs and categorical separation became even more evident and entrenched.

Compounding the problem has been the interpretation, or misinterpretation of Federal policy at the local level. The most obvious example is the "supplement-not-supplant" provision of Title I. There are numerous references in the literature to the misinterpretation of this regulation, suggesting commonly that the misinterpretation led to the widespread use of the pullout model for delivery of compensatory instruction (National Institute of Education, 1977b; Shulman, 1983). As Allington (1986) reports, this aspect of the regulation still seems widely misunderstood since better than one of three compensatory education administrators surveyed viewed the provision as disallowing non-pullout designs and congruent curricular materials. Nonetheless, we noted earlier that the pullout design also mirrored the most common organization for remedial services delivered in the university-based reading clinics that trained the reading specialist who organized the

remedial services in schools. Thus, the small group, in a small room, with a specially trained teacher, using specialized curricular materials and methods fit well into both the professional belief system and the Federal policy. This design is being perpetuated in programs for the learning disabled even though no similar Federal policy exists (Junkala & Mooney, 1986). In fact, Federal policy requires placement in the least restrictive environment as a matter of course, but the design of support services for the learning disabled leans heavily toward pullout from the least restrictive environment for services delivered in separate resource rooms. There are, undoubtedly, a variety of reasons why the pullout design has evolved as the most popular and some of these are related to Federal policies, but other reasons also exist (Bogdan, 1983; Lortie, 1976; Milofsky, 1976). While we do not wish to argue that non-withdrawal programs are inherently superior--they have their own set of problems--we do suggest that conguence between instructional programs is less likely to occur in pullout programs.

Legislation that presumes categorical identification and identifiable instructional needs based upon the categorical label will obviously shape the policies made at lower levels, especially if fiscal incentives are present (Johnston, McGill-Franzen, & Allington, 1985). However, as Leinhardt et al. (1982) argue, the established professional beliefs and alliances sustain and refine the policies made at the service delivery level. The separate Federal programs administered from different Federal offices often present a maze of conflicting information. This maze is often further complicated by state laws and regulations and state level interpretations of Federal policies. By the time the bundle reaches the local district, much less the local school building, the task of coordinating may seem unmanageable. While greater attention to the coordination of support services at the Federal level would undoubtedly help, that simply will not ensure that services at the local level provide coordinated and coherent instructional environments for the children served. Our pessimism should not deter any attempts at clarifying Federal policies but, we believe that it will take a major reconceptualization of both reading failure and support program design to undo what has already been so unfortunately achieved.

Some Alternative Assumptions and Practices

Instructionl Congruence

A number of the works which we have reviewed have stressed the importance of coordination between instructional programs. Few have described the features of coordinated programs. Some

have discussed the coordination in terms of the congruence between the curricula in the two contexts (Allington & Shake, 1986; Johnston, Allington, & Afflerbach, 1985). However, exactly what it means for instruction to be congruent has not been made clear. For example, we cannot see a remedial reading teacher bound to replicate a classroom reading program which is unsatisfactory. Also, we would not like to see a language-experience approach in a classroom program prevent the use of predictable language texts in the remedial program. Thus, we need to clarify the notion of congruence beyond simply "more of the same."

Perhaps we should explain our notion of what would be appropriate before addressing what we feel would be inappropriate. We view literacy development in terms of broad concepts about communication and social and personal development. Within these higher-level concepts lie a substantial variety of conceptual and procedural knowledge which individuals integrate in the pursuit of various goals in various circumstances. The individual skills, unorganized and unintegrated, are of limited help. Similarly, they are of little help if they are not automated, or if they are used inflexibly. Optimally, children will develop within a balanced language arts program. In reading for example, by balanced, we mean a program which emphasizes a variety of means of controlling the difficulty of text, such as: predictable language, familiar content, prereading, rereading, word frequency, meaning unit repetition, interest level, recency, and so on. Through a careful balance of such means of controlling difficulty, children can develop their weaknesses while being allowed success through the support of their strengths. For example, in the language experience side of a program a child is supported by his personal knowledge, syntax, vocabulary, and the personalized nature of the text, while he or she works on developing an understanding of graphophonic relationships through writing. Patterned language reading materials on the other hand, support the child through the predictability of the language, while introducing new vocabulary, new syntax, and new experiences. It is not difficult to tell whether children are involved in a literacy related task. However, it is hard for researchers or administrators who do not understand children's literacy learning to tell a balanced literacy program from an uncoordinated one and a coordinated one from a rigid, unbalanced program.

There are several major elements in this congruence issue. First, there is congruence between curricula--what is to be taught, in what order, and using which materials. Second, there is the method of instruction. The actual techniques which teachers use to help children learn the curriculum. Conflicts arise in the following sets of circumstances which we have encountered all too frequently in school settings:

- when the sets of difficulty control procedures in the materials in the two settings are radically different, for example, when extreme orthographic regularity reigns entirely in one setting but word frequency and natural language rule in the other setting. In such a situation, the reading strategies which are learned and practiced in one setting will be extremely inefficient in the other situation. One might see such conflict in a school where the core curriculum reading instruction is based on the Scott Foresman Reading Systems (Aaron et al., 1971) and the support program reading instruction, offered in remedial or special education resource rooms, follows the DISTAR (Engelmann & Bruner, 1975) curriculum.

- when the hierarchy of learning assumed in the two settings conflicts as when one setting emphasizes decoding as the essence of reading while the other setting focuses strongly on comprehension. In one case, the development of prediction will be discouraged, whereas in the other context it will be encouraged. One might see such a conflict in a school where the Houghton-Mufflin basal is the source of core curriculum reading instruction and the Merrill Linguistic Readers is offered in support programs.

- when the strategies to be learned differ from one context to the other. For example, long division can be taught in terms of "borrowing" or through conceptually quite different procedures.

- when instructional strategies differ radically in the two settings. For example, when one setting depends entirely on direct instruction and the other setting depends on learner-directed instruction. In such a case one context will stress self-monitoring and self-correction, while the other will prevent them.

- when the terminology and metaphors differ in the two settings the child is likely to become confused about some of the concepts. For instance, use of a "word family" (e.g.ake, ame) approach to decoding is coupled with a synthetic phonics approach.

If the two parts of a program could easily be seen operating within a coherent classroom program, then they are more or less congruent. There is the risk that with widely divergent approaches the children will be unable to integrate what they are being taught and will develop confused notions of the nature and purposes of reading. Vernon (1958) has

described the problem as one of "cognitive confusion", and some of its consequences have been documented by Johnston (1985). Thus, if two parts of a program are necessarily separate, then some part of the program needs to be devoted to clarifying how the parts fit together, otherwise, the integration, the tough bit, is left up to the children. It also seems likely that conflicts stemming from programmatic differences will be intensified with factors such as anxiety, which are often quite severe for failing learners. It is probably more efficient to ensure congruence from the outset.

We feel that the major aspect which affects these dimensions of instruction is the teacher's expertise. If we can consider both classroom and support teachers as experts, then presumably, the support teachers is more expert than the classroom teachers in a specific area such as reading or math curriculum and instruction. There are, of course, exceptions to this, and too often, poorly trained teachers' aides provide the remedial instruction. Experts differ from novices in three major ways. They differ in terms of the extent of their knowledge, the structure of their knowledge, and the flexible use of their knowledge (Chi, Glaser, & Rees, 1982). It is their knowledge of teaching of a specific content like reading, and how children learn, which makes them choose materials and techniques (to the extent that they perceive that they have choice in each area). The structure of teachers' knowledge becomes apparent when they teach and when they choose materials, and the differences can be substantial (DeFord, 1985). Unfortunately, these ideological differences are most pronounced at the beginning stages of reading and, as Carter (1984) and Clay (1982, 1985) have pointed out, the earlier remedial programs begin, the greater the likelihood of success.

In other words, there are essentially two curricula involved. One is the explicit curriculum expressed by the school curriculum, and the other is the implicit curriculum held in the knowledge structures of the teachers. Program planning decisions can be made on the basis of the explicit curriculum, but the moment to moment decisions must be automatic or intuitive, and will be made on the basis of the implicit curriculum. When the congruence issue is viewed this way, the clarity and coherence of the overall school curriculum becomes important. There should be a clear, explicit, reading curriculum including the philosophical underpinnings of the curriculum, and it should encompass descriptions of how students with special needs instruction should differ from that of regular students needs, if it is indeed felt that it should differ in some way.

If a school seriously adopts a basal series, there is likely to be some coherence in the overall reading instruction provided. Indeed, some evidence suggests that "effective

schools" are more likely to have a school-wide adoption than are less effective schools (Clark & McCarthy, 1983). This may be because the basal curriculum, while constraining decisions, does provide a more coherent school-wide curriculum than an "every teacher for him/herself" situation in which no common basal or other unified curriculum exists. However, a unified curriculum, whether or not achieved through a basal series, does not ensure compatibility of the curricula implicit in the teachers' knowledge structures, which is a much more difficult congruence to attain. For example, with respect to reading instruction, the training undertaken by teachers preparing to serve learning disabled students is generally substantially different from that undertaken by teachers training specifically to serve students with special needs in reading. This difference is ideological and influences how students' behaviors are interpreted, and how they are seen as different from other students (Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 1982).

It seems that the effects of teachers' ideological differences might be minimized through a clear curriculum, cooperative planning of that curriculum, and coordinated inservice programs. Many schools' curricula are defined by the basal series adopted, and serious school-wide adoption constrains some dimensions of classroom instruction. For example, each basal series opts for particular forms of text difficulty control. It would not be easy for a teacher to stress prediction and self-monitoring if the basal program selected and enforced were the Merrill Linguistic Series for which unpredictable text has deliberately been constructed, difficulty control being through restriction of the letter-sound relationships. In the same way, a developmental reading program based on reading trade books stressing self-monitoring and self-correction in the classroom would seriously conflict with a direct instruction program such as DISTAR (Engelmann & Bruner, 1975) in the support program, which stresses immediate feedback by the teacher where errors occur.

Returning to the question of balance then, an expert remedial teacher might observe the classroom teacher's reading program and decide that it is a balanced program. But that within that program, a certain student requires special attention in a specific area which might not be possible to attend to in the classroom, at least to the level that is necessary for that student. Such instruction would include the broader framework particularly by highlighting how the focal points fitted into the broader program. For example, the student may require additional attention to hearing sequences of sounds in words. This can be difficult for some children to pick up in a group. The teacher could work on that in the context of writing, and/or reading real stories. On the other hand, observation of the classroom instruction might reveal an unbalanced program. For example, suppose a classroom teacher's

program consisted almost entirely of phonic analysis. Difficulty control in such a program is accomplished by constraining the letter-sound relationships, and success is defined by accurate pronunication of words. A reading teacher, can decide to work with the classroom teacher to help balance up the program, or can try to shore up the balance independently. The former involves extensive communication, which currently seems lacking. The latter requires not simply teaching the untaught skills, but teaching in such a way that the instruction ensures the integration of that learned in the regular program with that learned in the remedial program. Again, this requires knowledge of the other program, which implies some form of communication.

The implication here is that the individual responsible for program coordination must have extensive knowledge of how readers develop and of frameworks of instructional techniques. At the same time, such individuals must actively encourage communication between teachers in regular and remedial programs. It is not possible to attend to the relationship between the learning in two programs if one is only aware of the activity in one of the programs, as is frequently the case (Johnston, Allington, & Afflerbach, 1985). There needs to be extensive investigation of ways in which cooperative instructional programs can be developed. This raises the issues of communication and awareness of other teachers' approaches, as well as that of compatibility of knowledge structures. It seems likely that the more congruent teachers' knowledge structures are, the less time is likely to be involved in communicating and coordinating programs, and the more congruent the programs are likely to be in the first place. Similarly, when two teachers have an extensive knowledge of how each other teaches, even if their knowledge structures differ, they are more likely to be able to build bridges between each other's programs.

Current "cellular organization" (Lortie, 1976) of classrooms tends to isolate teachers one from another so that they do not develop knowledge of each others' teaching approaches. The use of in-class approaches for support program instruction may foster a greater knowledge of program compatibility, but because of ego defense may actually reduce the likelihood of cooperation unless the arrangement is self-induced. Various contextual factors seem likely to influence the probability of teachers cooperating. For example, competitive organizational structures such as those set up in some career ladder systems seem less conducive than do cooperative organizational structures (Ames & Ames, 1984). These are matters which need some serious consideration in future research.

Opportunity to Learn

Although support for the notion of differential instruction for differential categories of students has been seriously underminded (Stainback & Stainback, 1984), the residual effects of the approach are still evident in the training of many specialists and teachers, and it remains implicit in the structure of P.L. 94-142. In some respects this situation almost guarantees a lack of congruence between instructional programs. We believe that there is reasonable evidence that this situation deserves to be remedied. On the basis of the lack of support for differential instruction, and the rather extensive evidence that sheer opportunity to learn is a powerful explanatory variable (Leinhardt & Pallay, 1982), we think it would be better to begin planning support curricula with the assumption that the differences between the special needs and regular students reside largely in the need for differential opportunities to learn (Good, 1983; Crawford, Kimball, & Patrick, 1984; Hiebert, 1983; Zigmond, Vallecorsa, & Leinhardt, 1980). Such a reevaluation may change the nature and consequences of student labeling practices.

Under such an assumption there is every reason to coordinate instruction so that program effects are cumulative rather than fragmented. In addition, there is greater reason to support unified planning of academic programs which include special needs students and their teachers from the beginning. If the mystique surrounding the nature of the differences between the regular and special needs students is broken down, there is likely to be a greater sharing of responsibility. If the root of a child's reading problem is perceived to lie in neurological causes, then not only is differential instruction seen as a logical consequence, but the problem goes beyond the training of the classroom teacher and out of his/her responsibility. It is time to reexamine the assumptions underlying the legislation and its interpretation.

Supplement-not-Supplant

A major dictum of the Chapter 1 regulation is the notion that remedial assistance should supplement and not supplant the regular instructional efforts. The intention was to prevent schools from simply using Federal money to fund existing instructional efforts. As we have already noted, interpretations of this regulatory language have produced aberrant instructional situations. For example, some believe that it prohibits in-class programs and others believe that it insists on different instructional methods and materials (Johnston, Allington, & Afflerbach, 1985). However, the basic problem is that within a given school day, unless the school day is extended for remedial children, some teacher's efforts must

generally be supplanted in order to provide remedial support. Thus, the notion of supplementation needs to be examined in terms of the alternatives open to school systems.

One approach to this is to stagger the school day to allow some students to arrive and leave before others. This allows for reduced teacher-pupil ratios during parts of the day. Such an approach has been used, for example, in Sweden (Clay, 1979). Similarly, it has been shown that using Chapter 1 money to substantially reduce the teacher-pupil ratio across the board can produce gains for the low-achieving students (Doss & Holly, 1982). Leinhardt (1980), however, notes some potential risks in this approach derived from lowered expectations. In some ways, such an approach reduces the need for coordination since only one program exists. For teachers who know what they are doing, and who do not reduce, but rather increase the level of instruction, this seems to be an option well worth exploring. We are not yet convinced that this approach will make a difference for teachers with limited expertise.

Research suggests that within a fixed-length school day, it is also possible to supplant regular instruction somewhat, provided the displacement is relatively short-lived. The critical features which make it short-lived have to do with the fact that the remedial students must learn substantially faster than the regular students. The faster they learn, the briefer the supplantation. The conditions which produce this accelerated learning seem to include efficient, effective instruction focusing on independence, low teacher-pupil ratio (particularly one-on-one), and early intervention (Carter, 1984; Clay, 1985). For example, under these conditions, Clay (1982; 1985) has shown that for the children making the least progress in literacy development, one-on-one instruction for 30 minutes per day, four days a week, can bring most of them to levels comparable to the average group of students who need no further support. It is important to note that this approach took place within a context of strongly comparable teacher knowledge structures, extensive cooperative arrangements between teachers to release one another for parts of the school day, and considerable administrative support. However, with respect to the present discussion, the important point is, that if regular instruction, in whole or in part, is temporarily replaced with highly effective individual instruction, the problem of congruence is substantially reduced except for the problem of reintegration into the regular curriculum, which is, of course, the goal of the program and remains critical. The reintegration largely means that the instruction should emphasize, and spend most time on, the reading of connected text, which is what will be required in the regular classroom.

Currently, the likelihood of such intensive, preventive approaches being implemented seems minimal. The notion of

prevention appears to require resource investment where there is not yet (and may never be) a problem. In times of shrinking resources such as the present, this does not seem likely to gain favor. While one-on-one instruction has received bad press in some of the literature (see for example, Rosenshine & Stevens, 1984) it appears that there may have been some overgeneralization from classroom studies. The work of Bloom (1984) and Clay (1982, 1985) strongly favors intensive, early one-on-one-tutoring, and the Title I evaluation work of Carter (1984), Crawford et al. (1984), and Guthrie, Seifert, and Kline (1978) provides additional support for low teacher-pupil ratios, preferably one-on-one.

Early intervention is not encouraged by current assessment practices (Johnston, 1984) or by funding policies and practices, but there are some serious disadvantages in delaying intervention. Less able readers normally learn more slowly in their regular classroom program than do other students. Thus they fall increasingly further behind. This means that even with accelerated learning, later intervention will require longer intervention in order for students to catch up. In addition, the secondary characteristics which such students pick up as a consequence of continued failure, extend even further than the necessary length of the intervention program (Johnston, 1985; Johnston & Winograd, 1985). Associated with this, remedial teachers currently have to deal with up to 10 children at once, and because of scheduling problems, frequently the children range over several grades in performance level. The size and heterogeneity of the reading groups often scheduled for remedial teachers makes faster learning impossible. Each of these factors simply compounds and prolongs the coordination problem, thus we suggest that along with consideration of program coordination, additional assumptions which impact upon the length and likelihood of coordination should be re-examined.

Summary and Conclusions

In this paper we have reviewed the available research on instructional coordination, and tried to clarify what coordination is, what it does, and what is likely to maximize its occurrence. While there are various levels of both vertical and horizontal coordination, our particular focus has been on the lowest level of coordination, that which impacts the individual student's learning directly. We have examined coordination as it impacts the quality of instruction delivered to students.

We have stressed the importance of policy making at the lowest levels, by direct service providers in school buildings,

more than policy making at either state or Federal levels. Nonetheless, it seems that state and Federal policy does exert influence on the policy making in schools. Thus, we suggest that policy generated at the upper levels must emphasize the following:

- The policies generated by several Federal agencies and programs serving children with exceptional educational needs must provide a coordinated and coherent focus for lower-level policy makers.

- The policies generated at the Federal level must focus more on "service quality" and less on separating funds by categorical programs. The latter seems to emphasize clear "audit trails" and work against the design of district-wide or school-wide coordinated efforts for providing appropriate educational support services to a wide variety of children exhibiting any of several educational service needs.

- The policies generated at the Federal level must emphasize the similarity of instructional needs amongst the children served by the several current categorical programs.

To achieve these shifts may require a number of organizational rearrangements in the Department of Education. These might include:

- Merging the agencies in charge of compensatory education, of the handicapped and vocational education, to name a few. Such an agency would be responsible for developing policy that emphasizes school-wide (or district-wide) efforts to use Federal funds to provide a comprehensive and coordinated support program for all children with exceptional educational needs regardless of the current label.

- Alternatively, the Office of the Secretary of Education could emphasize coordination amongst the several agencies and a better articulation of Federal roles in achieving effective schools for the various "at-risk" populations. We see, for instance, a distinct potential for the announced "effective schools" initiative of the Department of Education. Were these awards to require demonstrated coordination of all Federal programs funds and to emphasize the "service quality" improvement to be achieved by such coordination, the Department of Education would be clearly signalling a shift in previous policy emphasis. As we have noted before, such policy making at Federal levels will undoubtedly produce new

policy at lower levels and we, perhaps naively, suspect that lower-level policy making will also shift noticeably toward coordination and coherence in the design of support programs for children with exceptional educational needs. Also, the "effective schools" initiative is a small enough target that we may be able to create local policy shifts in districts that are interested. This may need enabling legislation or regulatory exceptions on trial bases. But we think it is likely to be more successful if the local districts create models, rather than trying to improve the models from above. Subsequently, the most effective local efforts might be encouraged and disseminated.

We expect none of this to be easily achieved, and most difficult may be obtaining shifts in the content of instruction offered in support of regular programs, in order to produce an integrated program of instruction for the individual student. We have pointed out that studies that have examined coordination among regular and various support programs, regardless of definition, have invariably found it rare, but where evident, important to children's learning. However, we have found that there is little clear description of exactly what coordinated instruction would look like short of "more of the same". While we have made an attempt, there needs to be research directed toward clarifying this issue. There are sufficient ideological differences over the nature of reading instruction that it would be inappropriate for Federal or state legislators to intervene in this area. However, whatever the ideology, it does not seem unreasonable that within a given school, for a given pupil, the instruction be coherently articulated. We feel that curricular coordination may be further encouraged at the local level through some of the following:

- It seems likely that explicit, and cooperatively engineered curricula with similarly explicit rationales would go a long way toward ensuring instructional congruence.

- While unified explicit curricula would help, they would certainly not guarantee coherently articulated instructional services. A serious stumbling block remains in the form of teachers' knowledge structures, or what might be termed the "implicit curriculum". This implicates teacher training and programmatic teacher inservice development. Teacher training initially develops these knowledge structures, and subsequent teacher isolation, issues of "turf", and the other institutional and policy issues discussed, perpetuate the differences.

- Communication among teachers, both regular and support, might be fostered in a variety of ways including requiring regular conferences between teachers involved with specific special needs children. Time must be specifically allocated to this activity but time allocation is not enough. All teachers will have to acquire a sense of ownership of the problem student and his or her instruction. Cooperative planning may not be easily accomplished but it must begin.

- Required observation of special needs student performance in another class setting is likely to provide better knowledge of different components of the child's actual curriculum, and concrete grounds for discussions between teachers.

- Continuous process records of children's development may be very helpful in inducing curricular alignment. For example, such records might contain samples of the child's writing, and running records of reading behaviors (Clay, 1985) over time. If teachers are required to keep such records, and provided with the expertise to do so with minimal additional effort, the nature of the files will focus instruction, and the data within the files will give a more concrete foundation for teachers' discussions of students' progress and difficulties.

We have argued that, in addition to attempts to improve coordination, it would be helpful to have concurrent progress toward reducing the demands on coordination. In particular, we have stressed the need for:

- Clearly developed district policies supporting coordination.

- Early attention to difficulties with an emphasis on prevention.

- Short-term, highly intensive intervention in order to eliminate the need for support services as quickly as possible.

- Low teacher-pupil ratios, particularly in the early stages, and even one-on-one support instruction where possible.

- Intervention programs which focus on student independence so that students might return to the regular instruction and maintain progress.

- Intervention programs that focus on service quality more than categorical compliance. Again, we want to stress that the bottom line in any attempts to improve coordination is the ultimate effect on student learning.

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